

## Message Text

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41

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 IO-12 DPW-01 AID-20 RSR-01

/128 W

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O R 181050 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1845

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

CINCPAC

CDRUSSAG NKP TRAFB IMMEDIATE

COMUSMACTHAI

USDAO SAIGON

USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 8773

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJECT: VIETNAM CEASEFIRE SITUATION REPORT, MAY 18, 1973

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO  
THE EMBASSY AS OF 1800 MAY 18.

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

PART I: TWO PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION ( TPJMC):  
NO SIGN OF MOVEMENT.  
PART II: FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM/ MISSING IN ACTION  
( FPJMT/ MIA): US TEAM VISITS HANOI MAY 18 AS SCHEDULED.  
PART III: CIVILIAN DETAINEES:  
FATE OF EX- DEPUTY CHAU AND OTHERS DEBATED. AMNESTY  
GRANTED TO 1,086 FOR BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY.  
PART IV RVN- PRG BI- LATERALS:  
VIEN SUPPLEMENTS APRIL 25 PROPOSAL.  
PART V: VC/ HANOI PROPAGANDA:  
LIBERATION RADIO CALLS GVN PROPOSAL TO BEGIN PROCESS OF  
NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH A  
" DECEITFUL FARCE."  
PART VI: CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS:  
TOTAL CLAIMED BY VN PRESS PASSES 14,000.  
PART VII: MR-1: MAJOR INCIDENT IN FIRST DIVISION AO.  
PART VIII: MR-2: INCIDENTS AT RECORD LOW OF FOUR. FURTHER REPORT  
ON MAY 16 PHU MY ACTION IN BINH DINH PROVINCE.  
PART IX: MR-3: ICCS AN LOC OBSERVES B-52 OVERFLIGHTS.  
PART X: MR-4: ACTION IN CHUONG THIEN REMAINS HEAVY.

PART I: TWO PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION ( TPJMC):  
THE MAY 18 MEETING OF THE CHIEFS OF DELEGATION, WHICH LASTED FROM  
1000 TO 1500 HOURS, WAS ACrimonious AND INCONCLUSIVE. CONSIDER-  
ABLE TIME WAS SPENT IN UNPRODUCTIVE DISCUSSION OF CEASEFIRE  
IMPLEMENTATION AND MILITARY PRISONER AND CIVILIAN DETAINEE  
RELEASE, AND THE RVN DELEGATION AGAIN PUSHED HARD, WITHOUT  
SUCCESS, ON THE ISSUE OF DEPLOYMENT. THERE IS AS YET NO SIGN,  
ONE WEEK AFTER GENERAL TUAN'S ELEVATION TO PRG DELEGATION CHIEF,  
THAT THIS MOVE HAS HAD ANY BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON THE NEGOTIATIONS  
AT TAN SON NHUT.

PART II: FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM ( FPJMT): MIA  
1. EIGHT- MAN U. S. TEAM VISITED HANOI ON MAY 18 AS SCHEDULED. NO  
INFORMATION AVAILABLE AS OF 1730 AS TO THE RESULTS OF THE VISIT.

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2. CRASH SITE INVESTIGATION IN BAC LIEU PROVINCE IS SCHEDULED TO  
BE COMPLETED MAY 18. SOME PERSONAL EFFECTS BUT NO CONFIRMED  
REMAINS WERE FOUND.

PART II: CIVILIAN DETAINEES:

A. PROMINENT DETAINEES.

BRIGADIER GENERAL LE TRUNG TRUC, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE GVN INTERMINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON CEASEFIRE IMPLEMENTATION, MAY 18 CONFIRMED THE INFORMATION HE HAD GIVEN EMBOFFS EARLIER (SAIGON 8691) THAT THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER HAD DECIDED NOT TO TURN EX- DEPUTY CHAU, STUDENT MAM, OR MRS. THANH OVER TO THE COMMUNISTS. HE DECLARED THAT PRESS STORIES TO THE CONTRARY WERE NOT TRUE. HOWEVER, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR DIRECTOR OF CABINET, COLONEL HUYNH NGOC DIEP, TOLD EMBOFF MAY 18 THAT A FINAL DECISION HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE. HE EXPECTED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD ISSUE AN ORDER ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF NEX WEEK. (COMMENT: JUDGING FROM THE CONFLICTING INFORMATION APPEARING FROM DIFFERENT GVN SOURCES, WE SUSPECT THERE MAY BE DISAGREEMENT WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT ON THE DISPOSITION OF THESE PROMINENT DETAINEES. HOWEVER, GENERAL TRUC' S COMMENTS SEEM THE MOST DEFINITIVE OF THOSE RECEIVED TO DATE.)

B. BUDDHA' S BIRTHDAY RELEASES.

A MINISTRY OF INTERIOR SOURCE HAS CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT THE GVN GRANTED AMNESTY TO 1,086 PRISONERS ON THE OCCASION OF BUDDHA' S BIRTHDAY, MAY 17. AMONG THEM WERE 194 PERSONS CLASSIFIED AS BUDDHIST ACTIVISTS. THERE WERE ALSO AN UNDISCLOSED NUMBER OF COMMUNIST OFFENDERS, ALL OF WHOM HAD BEEN DETAINED FOLLOWING THE JANUARY 28 CEASEFIRE.

PART IV : RVN- PRG BI- LATERALS: VIEN SUPPLEMENTS APRIL 25 PROPOSAL.

SAIGON' S CHIEF DELEGATE NGUY

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USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y

PART VII: MR-1

1. FOURTEEN CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS WERE REPORTED, INCLUDING ONE GROUND ATTACK, 11 ATTACKS BY FIRE ( ABF) TOTALING AN UNUSUALLY HIGH 782 MORTAR ROUNDS, AND TWO HARASSMENTS. FIRST DIVISION AO WAS THE SCENE OF THE MAJOR PORTION OF THE ACTIVITY, INCLUDING  
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THE GROUND ATTACK AND 6 ABF'S WITH ALMOST ALL OF THE ENEMY MORTAR FIRE (745 ROUNDS). IN A MAJOR INCIDENT, AN ABF TOTALING 400 ROUNDS WAS AIMED AGAINST THE 1 ST BATTALION, 51 ST REGIMENT, WEST OF CO BI HAMLET NORTHWEST OF HUE BEGINNING AT 1700 HOURS MAY 17; FRIENDLY CASUALTIES WERE 7 WIA. FRIENDLY ARTILLERY FIRED 988 ROUNDS; 340 NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS, 648 SOUTH.

2. POW RELEASE. I CORP MORNING BRIEFING REPORTED THAT 4 GVN RELEASED BY PRG WERE PICKED UP BY RF IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE MAY 17. CANDEL ICCS REGION II HAD BEEN INFORMED BY SAIGON THAT THERE MIGHT BE UNSUPERVISED RELEASES IN THE REGION ON THAT DATE.

PART VIII : MR -2

1. SECURITY SITUATION. VC INITIATED INCIDENTS PLUMMETED TO A RECORD LOW OF FOUR ON ANNIVERSARY OF BUDDHA'S NATIVITY IN MR IIV TWO HARRASSMENTS BY FIRE, ONE MINING, AND ONE GROUND ATTACK-- ALL SMALL SCALE-- WERE REPORTED. THE FOUR ACTIONS WERE SPLIT EVENLY BETWEEN BINH DINH AND BINH THUAN, WHILE REST OF REGION WAS QUITE. ONLY CASUALTIES WERE THREE RVNAF WOUNDED IN NORTHERN BINH DINH.

2. MAY 16 PHU MY ACTION: REGIONAL TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER (TOC) IN NHA TRANG DISCLOSED TODAY THAT PATROLLING COMPANY OF 40 TH ARVN REGIMENT WHICH KILLED 53 VC ON MAY 16 IN PHU MY DISTRICT, BINH DINH, WAS ACTUALLY NOT ON PATROL. ACCORDING TO MOST RECENT TOC VERSION OF INCIDENT, 23 RD ARVN DIVISION G-2 RECEIVED FIRM INTELLIGENCE ON LOCATION OF VC BATTALION- SIZED

TRAINING CENTER IN NORTHWESTERN PHU MY DISTRICT, PICKED BEST COMPANY IN 40 TH REGIMENT FOR ACTION, AND MADE DETAILED PLAN FOR RAID.

3. OCS CADETS: MR II OFFICERS AT THE MAY 18 REGIONAL BRIEFING AT NHA TRANG REPORTED THAT THE OCS CADETS WHO HAD BEEN DEPLOYED TO THE REGION'S 12 PROVINCES TO CONDUCT PSYOPS HAVE ALREADY BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM NINE AND WOULD SOON BE LEAVING THE REMAINING THREE. OF THE 3,400 WITHDRAWN THUS FAR, ABOUT 300 WERE CLASSIFIED AS "CASUALTIES" -- EITHER SICK, AWOL OR DESERTED, AND A FEW KILLED. REGION OFFICIALS ARE DISTURBED BY THIS RELATIVELY HIGH ATTRITION RATE AND ARE TRYING TO DISCOVER THE REASONS.

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#### PART IX : MR-3

1. COMMUNIST ACTIVITY IN MR-3 REMAINED AT A VERY LOW LEVEL DURING THE 24- HOUR PERIOD ENDING 0800 HOURS 18 MAY. THERE WERE 11 COMMUNIST- INITIATED INCIDENTS REPORTED CONSISTING OF TWO ATTACKS BY FIRE ( ABF), FIVE GROUND CONTACTS, TWO SNIPINGS, AND TWO MINE INCIDENTS. TOTAL CASUALTIES FOR THE PERIOD WERE 12 FRIENDLY WOUNDED AND SEVEN COMMUNISTS KILLED. TON LE CHAM RANGER BASE CAMP, TAY NINH PROVINCE, RECEIVED 45 ROUNDS OF 61 MM AND 82 MM MORTAR FIRE. NO CASUALTIES OR DAMAGE WERE REPORTED.

2. DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEF DO DANG TIEN OF HAU NGHIA SAYS THE COMMUNISTS IN CU CHI DISTRICT ARE ASKING THE PEOPLE NOT TO VOTE IN THE VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS. IN DUC HOA DISTRICT THE COMMUNISTS ARE ALLEGEDLY ASKING THE PEOPLE NOT TO JOIN THE DEMOCRACY PARTY.

3. COLONEL MORROW, CHIEF CANDEL ICCS REGION V, TOLD POLOFF THAT AN LOC ICCS TEAM OBSERVED TWO B-52 BOMBERS FLYING FROM WEST TO EAST, NORTH OF THE TEAM'S LOCATION IN AN LOC. THE INCIDENT WAS REPORTED TO REGION V HEADQUARTERS, AND THEN TO SAIGON.

#### PART X : MR-4

1. FIGHTING IN MR-4 TOOK NO HOLIDAY ON BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY, MAY 17, AS 44 VC/NVA- INITIATED INCIDENTS OCCURRED IN THE DELTA. CHUONG THIEN AGAIN RECEIVED MOST OF THE PUNISHMENT WITH 27 INCIDENTS REPORTED. GVN FORCES LOST EIGHT KILLED, 80 WOUNDED, AND ONE CAPTURED, WHILE VC/ NVA LOSSES WERE 36 KILLED AND FOUR CAPTURED. FIVE CIVILIANS DIED.

2. THE VC/ NVA HAVE INFLICTED HEAVY PUNISHMENT UPON CHUONG THIEN PROVINCE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK. OTHER NORMALLY HOT PROVINCES-- DINH TUONG, CHAU DOC, THE HONG NGU DISTRICT OF KIEN PHONG-- HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY QUIET. THE VC/ NVA APPEAR TO BE CONSOLIDATING THEIR EXISTING GAINS AND IMPROVING THE SUPPLY AND COMMUNICATION ROUTES THROUGH THE PROVINCE BY WHICH THEY

INFILTRATE MEN AND MATERIEL FROM CAMBODIA AND THE U MINH  
FOREST THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHERN DELTA.

3. GENERALLY ESCHEWING LARGE- SCALE GROUND ASSAULTS, THE VC/ NVA  
IN CHUONG THIEN HAVE BEEN POUNDING AWAY AT GVN OUTPOSTS AND  
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OTHER FIXED POSITIONS WITH 107 MM ROCKTTS, 82 AND 62 MM MORTARS,  
AND 57 MM RECOILESS RIFLES. VC/ NVA ATTACKS APPEAR TO BE DESIGNED  
TO PUNISH AND DEMORALIZE THE GVN DEFENDERS AT MINIMUM COST TO  
THEMSELVES. WITH VITAL INFILTRATION ROUTES COVERING IN THE  
PROVINCE, THE HEAVY FIGHTING IN CHUONG THIEN MAY BE PRIMARILY  
A COMMUNIST EFFORT TO KEEP OPEN ITS GATEWAY TO THE CENTRAL AND  
SOUTHERN DELTA.

4. IN DINH TUONG DURING THE LAST SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS WE HAVE ALSO  
NOTED A SHARP INCREASE IN THE RATE OF INDIECT FIRE DIRECTED  
AGAINST RVNAF POSITIONS, PRIOR TO THIS TIME THE VC/ NVA FIRED  
TWO TO THREE ROUNDS PER ATTACK; SINCE THEN A MINIMUM OF TEN  
AND AS HIGH AS TWENTY TO THIRTY ROUNDS ARE FIRED. THE VC/ NVA  
IN ADDITION RETURN TO ATTACK AS MANY AS FIVE TO SIX DAY IN  
SUCCESSION.  
WHITEHOUSE

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